

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Semiotics, derived from the Greek word *semeion* meaning “sign,” is the study of signs and how they create meaning within social and cultural contexts. It examines communication not only through language but also through visual, auditory, and symbolic forms (Saussure, 1983; Barthes, 1977). At the foundational level, Saussure emphasizes the relationship between the signifier and the signified as the basis of meaning. Building on this foundation, Barthes expands the concept through denotation and connotation, illustrating how cultural meanings are layered onto signs. Through this perspective, semiotics becomes a useful tool for understanding how meaning is not merely transmitted, but socially constructed.

Following this theoretical grounding, semiotics plays an increasingly important role in modern communication. In contemporary society, meanings are embedded in media texts, advertisements, and everyday symbols, making semiotics essential for decoding how messages influence perception and behavior (Chandler, 2017). To understand this process more clearly, it is necessary to examine the types of signs involved in communication. Verbal and visual signs are central to meaning-making: verbal signs convey explicit messages through language, while visual signs such as images, colours, and symbols evoke emotions and cultural associations (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Eco, 1976).

Rather than operating independently, verbal and visual signs often function together to strengthen meaning. Barthes (1977) refers to this interaction as the “rhetoric of the image,” where text and visuals collaborate to persuade audiences. Through this interaction, messages become more impactful and memorable. Understanding how these signs work together allows researchers to analyse how meanings are encoded by producers and interpreted by audiences across different media platforms.

At a broader level, signs are fundamental to human communication and cultural expression. Meaning is not fixed or universal but is socially negotiated through signs within specific contexts (Hall, 1997). In this regard, visual communication is particularly significant because it can transcend linguistic boundaries and convey emotional and cultural meanings effectively (Machin, 2014). Consequently, analyzing verbal and visual signs provides valuable insight into how identity, ideology, and culture are communicated and maintained in society.

This process becomes especially visible within media, which functions as a powerful semiotic space. Media texts such as advertisements, films, and digital content use complex semiotic systems to influence audiences both cognitively and emotionally. According to Williamson (1978) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), media constructs social values, identities, and power relations through language, imagery, and design. Among various media forms, posters are particularly effective because they combine concise text with strong imagery to deliver persuasive

messages (Messaris, 1997). Similarly to symbols such as the red colour, club crest, and the motto “You’ll Never Walk Alone” function as powerful non-verbal signs that resonate emotionally with fans (Boyle & Haynes, 2009).

In conclusion, semiotics provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how verbal and visual signs construct meaning in football sponsorship media. By analysing Liverpool FC’s sponsorship videos promotional campaigns, this study explores how meaning is produced, interpreted, and strategically used to strengthen club identity and marketing objectives.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on these definitions, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the verbal and non-verbal signs found in Liverpool FC’s sponsorship videos promotional campaigns?
2. How is meaning conveyed through the verbal and non-verbal signs used in Liverpool FC’s sponsorship videos promotional campaigns?

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1.3 Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To describe the verbal and non-verbal signs used in Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns.
2. To analyse the meaning of verbal and non-verbal signs used in Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

This study analysed the verbal and non-verbal signs contained in Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns, such as video advertisements campaigns. The discussion focuses on identifying the forms of linguistic and visual elements that appear in these promotional materials and interpreting the meanings they convey in the context of sports branding and marketing communication. The research does not cover other aspects such as audience perception, marketing effectiveness, or financial impact of sponsorship. Instead, it concentrates solely on how visual and linguistic signs are constructed and function as a medium to represent messages, values, and identities in Liverpool FC's sponsorship.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute to the understanding of the verbal and non-verbal signs used in identical topic, or in similar scope especially about the

analysis of meaning. The study offers both theoretical and practical significance are as follow:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research enriched the academic understanding of semiotics in the field of sports communication. By examining how verbal and non-verbal signs function in Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns, the study contributes to the broader discussion of meaning-making in media and branding. It also supports the development of semiotic analysis as a relevant approach to explore how visual and linguistic elements convey identity, emotion, and cultural values within football sponsorship.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

From a practical perspective, this research will offer insights for marketing professionals, brand strategists, and football club media teams on how to design effective sponsorship messages. The findings may help them understand how verbal and visual signs can be combined to communicate values, strengthen brand identity, and build emotional connections with audiences. Furthermore, this study can serve as a useful reference for future researchers interested in the intersection of semiotics, advertising, and sports marketing.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE, CONCEPTS, AND THEORIES

This chapter is divided into three main subchapters, the review of related literature, concepts, and theories. The first subchapter discusses several previous studies related to semiotic analysis in Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns, focusing on the use of verbal and non-verbal signs. The second subchapter explains the main concepts used in this research, including semiotics, verbal signs, non-verbal signs, football sponsorship, and Liverpool FC as the object of analysis. The third subchapter presents the theoretical foundations applied in this study, namely Saussure's theory of signs, Barthes' theory of denotation and connotation, and Cerrato's theory of colour, which together support the analysis of meaning construction in Liverpool FC's sponsorship campaigns.

2.1 Review of related literature

This chapter consists of three main parts: review of related literature, concepts, and theories. These components are described descriptively to provide a strong foundation for the research. The review of related literature discusses previous studies related to the semiotic analysis of verbal and non-verbal signs in video advertisements sponsorships. Each reviewed work is summarized in terms of its aims, theories, methodologies, findings, and the similarities and differences compared to the current study.

The first article, written by Wahyuni, et.al. (2022) entitled “*A Semiotic Analysis of Public Service Advertisement*”, aims to examine how semiotic elements contribute to the construction of meaning in advertisements. The data were collected from public service advertisements, and the study applied Saussure’s (1983) semiotic theory and Leech’s (1981) theory of meaning using a qualitative descriptive method. The findings showed that verbal signs and non-verbal elements such as images, colours, and symbols work together to create persuasive messages. The similarity with the current study lies in the focus on semiotic analysis, while the difference is in the data source the previous study analyzed public service advertisements, whereas the present research focuses on football sponsorship materials.

The second article, written by Suryani, et.al (2022) entitled “*Semiotic: Analysis of Verbal and Nonverbal Signs of Canggu Weekly Advertisement*”, aims to analyze the use of verbal and non-verbal signs in promotional media. The data were taken from the *Canggu Weekly* magazine advertisement. The authors applied the semiotic theories of Saussure (1893) and Barthes (1977) using a qualitative approach. The findings indicated that the advertisements predominantly used denotative meanings, making the messages easier for the audience to interpret. The similarity with the current research is in the analytical approach using semiotics, while the difference is in the context previously lifestyle advertisements, whereas this study explores football-related sponsorship campaigns.

The third study, conducted by Juliarti (2020) entitled “*An Analysis of Semiotic Signs Found in Nivea’s Advertisement*”, aims to identify and interpret verbal and non-verbal signs in beauty product advertisements. The study used Saussure’s (1983) semiotic theory and Leech’s (1974) theory of meaning, employing a qualitative descriptive method. The results showed that 60 verbal signs and 31 non-verbal signs were found, illustrating how language and imagery work together to convey beauty and confidence. This research shares methodological similarities with the current study but differs in its object of analysis beauty advertisements versus football sponsorship.

The fourth article, by Sena, et. al (2016) entitled “*The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Signs of Adidas Advertisements*”, explores how Adidas employs verbal and visual signs to express brand identity. Using Saussure’s (1983) semiotic framework and a qualitative descriptive method, the study revealed that Adidas used metaphorical language and symbolic imagery to emphasize performance, resilience, and innovation. This study is closely related to the present research as both analyze branding messages in sports-related advertisements, but the current study focuses specifically on sponsorship content by Liverpool FC.

The last article, conducted by Widiarta, et.al (2021) entitled “*Analysis of Semiotic Signs in Football Shoes Advertisements*”, investigates verbal and non-verbal elements in sports product advertising. Applying Saussure’s (1983) theory of signs and Barthes’s (1977) concepts of denotation and connotation, the study found that football advertisements frequently employ metaphors to evoke emotions

and foster a sense of connection with their audiences. This finding aligns with the current study, which also explores metaphorical and symbolic communication in football sponsorship materials, although with a different data focus on sponsorship rather than product advertising. In summary, the reviewed studies share a common emphasis on semiotic analysis in advertisements but differ in context, data type, and objectives. The present research extends these discussions by focusing on football sponsorship, particularly Liverpool FC, offering insights into how semiotic elements shape the communication of identity, values, and branding in global sports marketing.

2.2 Concepts

In this analysis, the data were taken from Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns. The analysis focused on semiotic, Semiotic is the study of signs and how they create meaning Saussure (1983:16) describe it as a science that examines how signs function in society, verbal, and non-verbal elements found in the Video advertisements.

2.2.1 Non-verbal Sign

Non-verbal signs convey meaning without the use of language, or in association to ideas (Saussure, 1983:65). Comparatively, it could also be associated with visual elements such as jersey logos, colours, gestures, and spatial arrangements that In Liverpool FC's sponsorship videos promotional campaigns, for the example the use red jersey, sponsor logo, non-verbal signs can be seen in the way models or players, the colour chosen to create a certain feeling, these elements help people understand the messages of the quickly, even before they read any text.

2.2.2 Verbal Sign

According to Saussure (1983:66), verbal signs are language signs used for communication. They consist of a signifier and a signified that together create meaning. Barthes (1977:34) explain that's word in media such as advertisement, slogans, taglines, or spoken words in advertisement. These signs are used to express values such as strength, unity, passion or innovation.

2.2.3 Liverpool FCs

Liverpool FC offer a rich semiotic landscape due to its deep cultural symbolism and commercial evolution. The club's iconic imagery, anthem "You 'll Never Walk Alone", and fan rituals carry layered meanings. Its transition from local to global sponsor reflects broader trends in sports marketing, while maintaining tensions between commercial interest and authentic fan culture. This makes it ideal for studying how football advertising communicates through signs and symbols.

2.2.4 Semiotic

Semiotic is the study of signs and how they create meaning Saussure (1983:16) describe it as a science that examines how signs function in society. Signs come in different form: icons, logo, symbols, included even when looking at a movie poster, semiotic helps us break down the colour, images, and text to understand the messages they are sending to the audience.

2.2.5 Football Sponsorship

Football sponsorship is a commercial partnership between a football club and a brand or company, in which the sponsor provides financial or material support

to the club in exchange for visibility, brand association, and marketing opportunities.

2.3 Theories

This study was applied three main theories to guide the analysis and answer the research questions. Saussure's (1983:66) theory of semiotics will be used to identify and classify verbal and non-verbal signs, addressing the first research question about what types of signs appear in Liverpool FC's sponsorship materials. Barthes's (1977) theory of meaning, through his concepts of denotation Barthes (1988:91) explains that denotation is the first level of meaning. and connotation, According to Barthes (1988; 90), connotation is the second level of meaning, made up of signifiers and signified elements. will be employed to interpret the meanings behind those signs, thereby answering the second research question concerning how meaning is constructed and communicated. Finally, Cerrato's (2012) theory of colour will support the interpretation of non-verbal signs by explaining how colour choices evoke emotion and reinforce brand identity. Together, these theories provide an integrated framework for understanding how linguistic and visual elements in Liverpool FC's sponsorship work together to convey symbolic messages and values.

2.3.1 Semiotic

Semiotics, according to Saussure (1983: 65) sign is the relationship between the signifier (the form of the word sound) and the signified (the concept it represents) is arbitrary. Meaning is derived not from the word's direct connection to the object, but through its relationship to other signs within the language system.

This theory explains how signs are used to convey meanings, describes the language as a system of signs that are connected. According the Saussure (1983:67), a sign is not a single unit but consists two parts

1. Signifier is the form of the sign, including the letters, sounds, or symbols, that represent what the speaker or writer wants to express.
2. Signified is the idea or concept that the signifier represents. It is not a physical object but colour and emotions.

The image illustrates Saussure's concept of the linguistic sign, which consists of two inseparable parts. The signifier refers to the physical form of a sign, such as a word, sound, or symbol. The signified refers to the concept or meaning associated with that form. Together, the signifier and signified create a complete linguistic sign

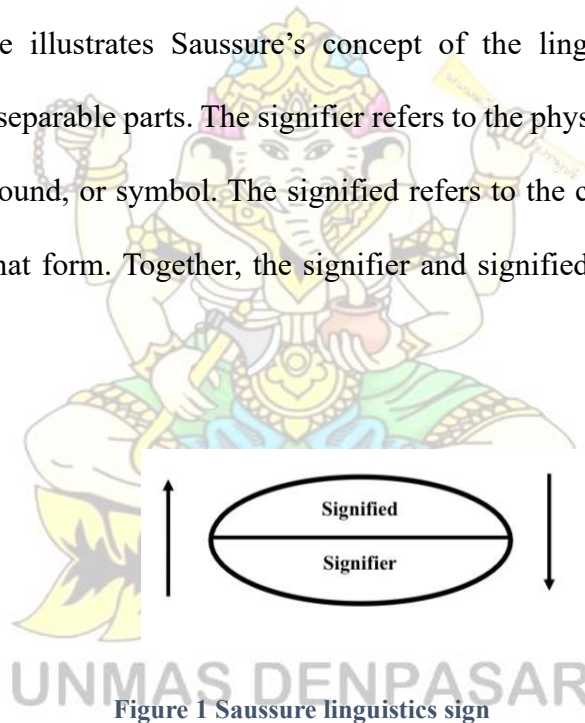


Figure 1 Saussure linguistics sign

(Saussure, 1983:67)

2.3.2 Theory of meaning

The word “meaning” refers to the general idea of what a word expresses when used in speech or writing. Roland Barthes, a French semiotics expert, believes that connotation is essential for developing a semiotic approach to modern culture because the literal meaning of language alone is not enough. According to Barthes

(1977:89), there are two types of messages when interpreting signs: denotation and connotation. Denotation is the first level of meaning, focusing on the literal definition of a word; connotation, on the other hand, is the second level of meaning, which is more subjective and influenced by emotions and cultural values.

2.3.2.1 Denotation

Barthes (1988:91) explains that denotation is the first level of meaning. It refers to the clear and direct connection between a sign and what it represents, including both the signifier and the signified.

2.3.2.2 Connotation

According to Barthes (1988; 90), connotation is the second level of meaning, made up of signifiers and signified elements, in this theory, connotation arises from the signifier of a denotative sign, meaning that denotation serves as a foundation for a chain of connotation.

2.3.3 The meaning of colours

According to Cerrato (2012; 6), each colour emits unique wavelengths that can influence human emotions and perception in different ways. Below are some common meanings.

2.3.3.1 Red

According to Cerrato (2012: 4), Red is the colour of fire and blood, so it's associated with energy, war, danger, strength, power, determination, desire, and love. Red represents masculine energy, whereas its softer version is often used to express love.

2.3.3.2 Orange

According to Cerrato (2012:7), Orange represents enthusiasm, fascination, happiness, creativity, determination, and attraction. In colour psychology, it means adventure, optimism. It appeals to a younger audience and is commonly found in children's toys, sports, products, and high-energy brands.

2.3.3.3 Yellow

Yellow represents a warming effect, sunshine, joy, and happiness. A person surrounded by yellow feels optimism because the brain actually releases more serotonin. Physiological yellow stimulated the mind and mental clarity. It increases the analytical processes and our logical reasoning, helping us make decisions (Cerrato, 2012:7).

2.3.3.4 Green

According to Cerrato (2012:9), the colour of growth, nature, and money. A calming colour, also, that's very pleasing to the senses. Psychologically, green relates to balance and harmony of the mind. Green is associated with human nature, health, healing, and also affects people's emotions, creating a sense of calm.

2.3.3.5 Blue

Blue is the colour of the sky or sea, and blue is considered beneficial to the mind and body. And also blue is a masculine colour, according to studies, it is highly accepted among males. Physiological blue is calming, reducing tension and fear. It slows the pulse rate and reduces appetite, and blue adds strength and unity; it brings harmony to the spoken word (Cerrato, 2012:11).

2.3.3.6 Purple

According to Cerrato (2012:3), purple is a very rare colour in nature; some people consider it to be artificial. Purple suggests wealth and extravagance, fantasy and the world of dreams. It enhances spiritual pursuits and enlightenment. Physiologically, purple heightens people's sense of beauty and their reaction to more creative ideas. Purple is often used to denote high quality or a superior product.

2.3.3.7 White

In colour psychology, white is the colour of new beginnings, wiping the slate clean, so to speak. It is the blank canvas waiting to be written upon, white is calming as it creates simplicity, organization, and efficiency out of chaos, it is clear forward. White is useful in business where cleanliness is imperative, such as in dental surgeries and cold environments. White actually is the best colour to use background (Cerrato, 2012:13)

2.3.3.8 Black

According to Cerrato (2012:15), black represents power, elegance, formality, and death. Black is a mysterious colour associated with fear and the unknown, black denotes strength and authority, it is considered to be very formal. Black gives the feeling of perspective and depth, but the background diminishes readability; but too much black can make a person feel depressed.

2.3.3.9 Pink

Pink relates to compassion, hope, and understanding. Pink reflects a softness, sweetness energy that works well for many product websites promoting women's products and services, such as a salon, fashion, and cosmetics. It is a beneficial colour for candy stores and other businesses selling sweet products (Cerrato, 2012:17).

2.3.3.10 Gold

According to Cerrato (2012:18), gold is seen as the colour of inner wisdom, quality, and wealth. It is associated with prestige, luxury, and material wealth, suggesting product or service is expensive and exclusive, it can induce great feelings of happiness and bliss or deep anxiety and fear. Gold also implies money and spirit; it is the colour for victory and gold medals.

2.3.3.11 Silver

Silver is a colour associated with prestige and wealth. It seen as a sophisticated colour related to female energy, prosperity, and modernity. With its reflective qualities, it relates to intuition, clairvoyance, and telepathy. Silver is calming and soothing, patience, reflection, organization, and responsibility. (Cerrato, 2012:119)

2.3.3.12 Grey

According to Cerrato (2012:120), grey is a conservative colour signifying neutrality and reserve physiological. Grey can drain your energy, be depressing,

depending on how much lightness. Grey serves as a good background for other colours as it does not attract attention. Allow the other colour to take prominence.

